Evaluation of a Tactical Surface Metering Tool for Charlotte Douglas International Airport via Human-in-the-Loop Simulation

DASC
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Outline

• Background
  – The Challenge
  – Previous Research
  – ATD-2’s Metering Tool
• Objectives of Study
• Tactical Surface Metering Tool
• Experiment Details
• Results
• Summary
The Challenge

Surface Congestion

Long Runway Queue

Loss of Predictability

Will Departure/Surface Metering help?
Previous Research on Metering Tool

- **Strategic Metering Tool at JFK (Stroiney et. al. 2013)**
  - Schedules provided two hours in advance
  - Taxi out benefits ranged from 1.5 to 2.7 min per flight

- **Spot and Runway Departure Advisor (SARDA) (Jung, Malik, Gupta & Hayashi, 2014)**
  - Tactical in nature, schedules for the next 15 min
  - Benefits to taxi times were shown for both DFW and CLT
  - SARDA did not use ready times or Earliest Off Block Times (EOBT) or Ration By Schedule (RBS) principles for creating schedules

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**Need a tactical metering tool that can be extended to include strategic scheduling**
ATD-2’s Metering Tool

• Does not control capacity, just estimates it
• Provides advisories that throttle demand to the runway during surface metering
  – Earliest off block times are used to estimate demand at any given time.
  – The tool does not double delay flights subject to FAA restrictions
  – Orders flights based on their accuracy of EOBTs, Priority, FAA restrictions, exempted flights
• Provides pushback advisories based on calculated Target Off Block Times (TOBT)

ATD-2 = Airspace Technology Demonstration-2
Objective of the Study

- Evaluate the Metering tool that provides recommended gate hold times or pushback advisories based on the formula:
  \[ \text{TOBT} = \max \left[ \text{EOBT} , \ \text{TTOT} - \text{UTT} - \text{Metering Value} \right] \]

- Evaluate the Metering Value that is agreeable to both Airline Ramp and the ATC-Tower
  - Metering value is a buffer or excess queue time that could be taken at the gate or as taxi delay

EOBT= Earliest Off Block Time
TOBT= Target Off Block Time
TTOT = Target Take Off Time
UTT= Unobstructed Taxi Time
Tactical Surface Metering Concept

- **Gate Pushback Advisories**
- **Spot Release Advisories**
- **Data Exchange & Integration**
- **Efficient Runway Schedule**

**Surveillance**
- EOBT
- Arrival Demand
- ATC Intent

**Runway Scheduler**
- Unobstructed Runway Times

**Spot Advisor**
- Metered Spot Times

**Gate Advisor**
- Metered Pushback Times

**EOBT** – Earliest OFF Block Times, **RBS**= Ration By Schedule
Metering Tool Advisories on User Interface

- Push advisory
  - EOBT < 10 min

- Gate Hold Advisory
  - 4 min
  - EOBT < 10 min

- Hashtag: Click here to get an advisory
  - EOBT > 10 min
Experiment Details

• Experimental Matrix
• Scenario
• Participants
• Tools and Equipment
### Experiment Matrix

- **Two variables:**
  - Metering Value / Level of Hold (3 levels)
  - Airport Configuration (2 levels)
- 3 x 2 matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metering Value</th>
<th>Runway Configuration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 min</td>
<td>N_8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>N_10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 min</td>
<td>N_12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Traffic Scenario in CLT

- South Dual Converging Operation
  - 92 arrivals & 80 departure per hour
- Triple North Operation
  - 75 arrivals & 65 departures per hour
- No wind, clear visibility, but IFR rules in effect
- No General Aviation flights
- No Cargo flights
- Duration 60 min
Participants

- Four Ramp Controllers – two active and two retired controllers
- One Ramp Manager
- Five Pseudo pilots as confederates
Tools & Equipment

- Ramp Control Tower to emulate Charlotte
  - 360 degree Simulator at Future Flight Central (FFC)
  - Ramp Traffic Console (RTC) & Ramp Manager Traffic Console (RMTC)
Ramp Traffic Console
Results

- Gate Hold Time
- Acceptability of Gate Hold Times
- Taxi Out Time
- Taxi In Time
- Queue in Airport Movement Area
- Run Durations
- Workload
- Situational Awareness
- Acceptability of departure queue
- Acceptability of departure demand
- South Flow Gate holds decrease as metering value increases
- North Flow is possibly impacted by short run duration
- Compliance to gate hold times is within 1 min
Acceptability of Gate Hold Times

Gate hold times were reported as “just right” by the participants.
Queue in Movement Area

North Flow Queue in Movement Area

- South Flow responds to different Metering values
- North Flow is not as responsive
## Run Duration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Run name</th>
<th>Runway Configuration</th>
<th>Metering value (min)</th>
<th>Run duration (min)</th>
<th>Departure number (OFF)</th>
<th>Arrival number (IN)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N_8</td>
<td>North flow</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N_10</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N_12</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S_8</td>
<td>South flow</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S_10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S_12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gate Hold and Taxi Time increases with increase in run duration more so in North Flow than South Flow

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**Results**
Workload was not significantly impacted by changes in the metering value.
The departure demand was reported as acceptable by both Ramp and ATC-T for metering value of 12.
Summary

• Metering value affects Gate Hold Time and Queue Size as expected
• Gate Hold Times were reported as "just right"
• Metering value of 12 reported as not drying up the runway or seen as creating long queues
• Metering value of 12 planned to be used as the nominal value for metering tool when deployed in the field
Thanks for your attention!

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Throughput in North

Accumulated takeoffs - North flow

Simulation time (minute)

Takeoffs (ac)

N_8  N_10  N_12
Throughput in South

Accumulated takeoffs - South flow

Simulation time (minute)

Takeoffs (ac)

S_8  S_10  S_12
Setting Metering Value

Level of Holds is based on Metering Value and is a balance between gate holds and runway queue size.
Tactical Surface Metering Concept

- Estimates capacity of current and future runway resources
- Builds an efficient runway schedule based on readiness, EOBT and RBS
- Calculates spot advisories that support the metered runway schedule
- Provides push back advisories from gates that support the spot advisories

Surface Modeler → Runway Scheduler → Spot Advisor → Gate Advisor

Surveillance → EOBT → Arrival Demand → ATC Intent

Unobstructed Runway Times → EOBT – Earliest OFF Block Times, RBS= Ration By Schedule

Data Exchange & Integration

Gate Pushback Advisories

Spot Release Advisories

Efficient Runway Schedule

Metered Spot Times → Metered Pushback Times
ATD-2’s Metering Tool

Data Exchange & Integration
- Integrated Arrival/Departure/Surface (IADS)
- Onramp to the overhead stream
- New data elements shared between FAA & Industry
- Real-time metrics for planning and awareness

Surface modeling, scheduling & metering
- Surface modeling based on heuristics and trajectory based model of airport operations
- Use of Earliest Off Block Times (EOBT) for the purpose of Scheduling
- **Surface Metering** based on demand and capacity imbalances, tactical in nature initially
ATD-2 Users
# EOBT Groups Metering Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>Flights with poor quality EOBT OR EOBT – current time &gt; 10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Flights within 10 min of EOBT (i.e., EOBT – current time &lt;= 10 min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready</td>
<td>Flights that have called in ready for pushback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out</td>
<td>Flights that are in pushback state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
<td>Flights that are cleared for taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queue</td>
<td>Flights waiting in the runway queue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Predictability

- **Less**
- **More**

## Order of Consideration

- **Lower**
- **Higher**